

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

State of the Water Management System

Water Shortage Edition



Weekly Update

February 11 - 15, 2008

**Mission Statement:**

To underscore our commitment to keep you informed, we will send this update weekly. We encourage you to share this water resources information with your constituents.



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South Florida Water
Management District
www.sfwmd.gov

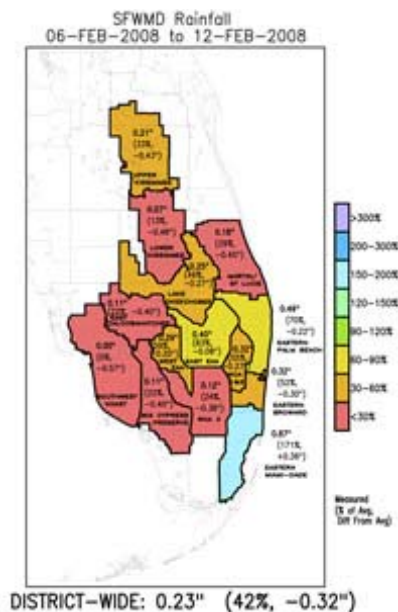
District News and Happenings

• The Lake Okeechobee committee of the District's Water Resources Advisory Commission will host the *2008 East Coast Water Summit* at the Martin/St. Lucie Service Center. The February 22 event will bring together stakeholders representing local governments, utilities, agriculture, environmental organizations, marine interests and the business community. Through a roundtable format, participants will hear from agency staff about the current state of the water management system, scientific challenges, how management decisions are made and upcoming climate and tropical outlooks. The forum will also detail options for managing the vast system under three different scenarios based on different rainfall conditions: average, below average and above average rainfall. For more information, visit www.sfwmd.gov/summit.

• To improve public access to stormwater treatment areas, the District and the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission last week dedicated the Harold A. Campbell Public Use Facility at STA-3/4 in southwestern Palm Beach County. At more than 17,000 acres, STA 3/4 is the largest constructed wetland in the world. This is the first public access site into the treatment wetland, which was constructed by the District to improve Everglades water quality. The facility commemorates the service of a former District employee and STA 3/4 construction inspector who died in 2006 in an automobile accident on U.S. 27. Throughout his nine years at the agency, Campbell reviewed nearly \$100 million in contractor payments and was an integral part of the team that planned, designed and built STA 3/4.

• Everglades restoration at the District will be featured in three TV episodes of *Aqua Kids* that will air on Florida stations and nationwide. *Aqua Kids* is a half-hour program showing young people taking action across the United States to preserve aquatic environments and wildlife. The Everglades episodes started airing this week. In them, the *Aqua Kids* explore the science behind environmental restoration, focusing on Everglades water quality improvements achieved by District stormwater treatment areas and the progress in restoring healthy estuaries. Activities in the program range from water quality testing and bird counts to fish sampling and swamp diversity studies. Camera crews and six students, including two from North Naples Middle School, filmed the segments last fall with assistance from District staff. ([Click here for local times and stations.](#))

System-Wide Overview



Click map for larger image

Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was 0.23 inches.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is above average.
- The cold front is expected to the north and brings showers to the east.

U.S. Drought Monitor:

The [Drought Monitor](#) focuses on broad-scale conditions and identifies general drought areas, labeling droughts by intensity. Last week, areas of the District fell into five levels of intensity, ranging from normal conditions to extreme drought.

Lake Okeechobee:

Lake Okeechobee measured 9.98 feet NGVD 29 (8.68 feet NAVD 88) on Tuesday, which is 0.07 feet lower than it was on that day last week and 0.14 feet lower than it was a month ago. The current water level is 1.50 feet lower than it was a year ago and 4.68 feet below its historical average for this time of year.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin:

During the last week, the upper Kissimmee Basin received 0.21 inches of rain, and the lower basin received 0.07 inches. Water levels in the upper basin lakes are at or below their regulation schedules. Lake Kissimmee continued discharging to the Kissimmee River. Releases are being made from Lake Tohopekaliga, also. Snail kites have begun nesting in the upper basin.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries:

Salinity increased in most areas of the St. Lucie Estuary over the past week. Based on the salinity tolerance of oysters, salinity conditions in the estuary are good. Average salinity in the Caloosahatchee Estuary changed little over the past week. Salinity conditions in the upper estuary, east of Ft. Myers are poor. Salinity conditions downstream of the Cape Coral bridge are fair.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs):

Rainfall was light everywhere but in WCA-1, where total rain for the week was about 0.58 inches. With average evaporation of 1.15 inches, this was another deficit water week. Water depths for wading bird foraging are good in WCA-2A, northern WCA-3A and Shark River Slough. Levels in WCA-1 remain slightly

below regulation, WCA-2A remains above regulation, and WCA-3 continues to be significantly below regulation.

Everglades National Park:

Park water levels continued to drop in response to low rainfall amounts.

Note: This rainfall information is based on rain gauges within the Park. The map above captures District rain gauge data only.

Florida Bay:

Salinity increased slightly or remained stable.

Water Restrictions, starting January 15, 2008:



Click map for larger image

[Residents and businesses of Broward, Glades, Hendry, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties](#) are limited to a one-day-per-week landscape irrigation schedule with two watering windows. Odd street addresses may irrigate lawns and landscapes on Mondays between 4:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Even street addresses may irrigate lawns and landscapes on Thursdays between 4:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Residents and businesses with more than five acres have expanded irrigation hours, between 12:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. on their designated irrigation day.

[For all locations of Collier and Lee counties, other than the City of Cape Coral](#), the typical homeowner may choose one four-hour watering window on your designated irrigation day - either 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. or 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Because jurisdiction in certain counties is shared with other water management districts, the SFWMD has coordinated with these agencies to simplify

implementation and enforcement. Residents of **Orange and Osceola counties** should adhere to any water restrictions set forth by the St. Johns River Water Management District. Residents of **Polk, Highlands, and Charlotte counties** should adhere to the water restrictions set forth by the Southwest Florida Water Management District. However, golf courses, nurseries, and agricultural users District-wide should follow SFWMD water use restrictions.

Did you know?

The South Florida Water Management District manages and protects the water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. Want to hear more? It would be our pleasure to meet with your organization to give a presentation and answer your questions. If interested, please contact Niki Spencer at 800-432-2045 or 561-686-8800, ext. 6004.

** SFWMD water managers and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers work together to manage Lake Okeechobee. Water releases from the lake are made in accordance with a federally authorized regulation schedule based on many factors such as time of year, current water conditions, predicted rainfall and lake level.*